

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6133

AMEMBASSY MANILA

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 13612

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, ASEAN, RP, SEATO

SUBJ: PHILIPPINE FOREIGN SECRETARY CARLOS P. ROMULO'S VISIT TO  
THAILAND

REF : BANGKOK 13533

SUMMARY: PHILIPPINE FOREIGN SECRETARY CARLOS P. ROMULO'S  
FOUR-DAY VISIT TO THAILAND (13-16 AUGUST) BROKE LITTLE, IF  
ANY, NEW GROUND THOUGH IT DID DRAW MORE ATTENTION TO THE  
TREND TOWARD A MORE UNIFIED AND ACTIVE ASEAN. IT APPEARS THAT  
ROMULO'S VISIT ALSO REAFFIRMED THE STRENGTH OF THAI-PHILIPPINE  
RELATIONS. HE ALSO DISCUSSED WITH THAI OFFICIALS MUTUAL  
CONCERNS REGARDING MINORITY MUSLIM POPULATIONS. IN A DISCUSSION  
WITH AMBASSADOR KINTNER, ROMULO ALSO EXPRESSED SATISFACTION  
WITH THE NEW TONE OF DIGNITY IN THE PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN ALLIANCE.  
END SUMMARY.

1. ROMULO'S VISIT RECEIVED WIDE COVERAGE IN THE THAI PRESS.  
"BANGKOK POST" EDITOR-IN-CHIEF THE (THEH) CHONGKHADIKIT REPORTED AT  
LENGTH ON ROMULO'S VISIT AND HIS VIEWS REGARDING ASEAN AND THE  
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DANGERS OF PEACE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA INHERENT IN ANY STRUGGLE FOR

INFLUENCE BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS OVER SOUTHEAST ASIA. IN HIS ARRIVAL STATEMENT, ROMULO EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT HIS TALKS WITH THAI OFFICIALS WOULD LEAD TO MOVES TO CONVENE AN "ASIAN FORUM" AMONG ASIAN HEADS OF STATE TO DISCUSS PEACE AND STABILITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. HE REITERATED THE CALL MADE AT THE NOVEMBER 1973 ASEAN MEETING IN JAKARTA FOR NON-AGGRESSION PACTS AMONG ASEAN MEMBERS. ROMULO ALSO PROPOSED THAT A CHARTER BE DRAWN UP FOR ASEAN IN THE BELIEF THAT SUCH A CHARTER ALONG WITH ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERMANENT SECRETARIAT WOULD GIVE ASEAN A PERMANENCE SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES. DURING A DINNER IN HIS HONOR GIVEN BY THAI FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN ITSARANGKUN NA AYUTTHAYA, ROMULO EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF, ACCORDING TO THE "BANGKOK POST" OF 14 AUGUST, THAT THERE "MUST EVOLVE A SOUTHEAST ASIAN COMMUNITY WHICH IS VIABLE AND STRONG ENOUGH TO STAND RELATIVELY BY ITSELF AND REMAIN INDEPENDENT. FOR THIS PURPOSE IT HAS TO BE AN INTEGRATED ENTITY OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMICAL POWER OF THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED...A CLOSELY KNIT ASSOCIATION OF NATIONS SUCH AS ASEAN...WILL BE ABLE TO SERVE AS AN INTRINSIC CORE FOR ATTAINING STABILITY AND ADVANCEMENT FOR ITS INDIVIDUAL PRESENT AND WOULD-BE MEMBERS AS WELL AS FOR THE REGION AS A WHOLE." ULTIMATELY, ROMULO PROFESSED TO BELIEVE, SUCH A GROUPING WOULD BECOME A "SUPRANATIONAL BODY WHERE THE REGIONAL INTEREST WOULD PREVAIL OVER THE NATIONAL INTEREST."

2. IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THEH AND AGAIN DURING A MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR KINTNER, ROMULO INDICATED HE BELIEVES THAT PEACE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA IS FROUGHT WITH DANGER BECAUSE WITH IT WILL COME A FIGHT FOR INFLUENCE BETWEEN THE SUPER-POWERS (THE U.S., USSR, CHINA, AND JAPAN). HE TOLD THEH, "OUR REGION IS A BONE FULL OF MEAT AND THE SUPER-POWERS ARE FOUR BULLDOGS SNARLING AT EACH OTHER TO GET THE MEAT. AS LONG AS THEY SNARL AT EACH OTHER THERE IS PEACE. HOW LONG WILL THAT LAST? THAT IS THE QUESTION."

3. ROMULO EXPECTS THAT THE PHILIPPINES WILL SOON RECOGNIZE THE PRC, AND SAW THIS AS A MOVE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE PHILIPPINES SINCE JAPAN AND AUSTRALIA HAVE ALREADY DONE SO, AND THE U.S. AND THE PRC ARE TALKING TO EACH OTHER. ROMULO ALSO TOLD AMBASSADOR KINTNER THAT THE USSR WILL SOON OPEN AN EMBASSY IN MANILA. HE SAID THE PHILIPPINES HAD HELD THE RUSSIANS OFF A LONG TIME BUT COULD DO SO NO LONGER.

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4. DURING HIS MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR KINTNER, ROMULO, IN ADDITION TO REPETITION OF THE OBSERVATIONS REPORTED ABOVE, MADE SEVERAL OTHER POINTS. SEATO, HE FELT, SHOULD CONCENTRATE ITS EFFORTS FOR NOW ON INTERNAL INSURGENCY PROBLEMS. U.S. NATIONAL SELF-INTEREST WILL KEEP THE U.S. IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. HE MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY MARKETS, GLOBAL STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS, AND THE FACT THAT HAWAII AND ALASKA ARE PACIFIC STATES. ROMULO INCLUDED THE UNITED

STATES AS ONE OF THE FOUR BULLDOGS, BUT CONCEDED THAT IT WAS PERHAPS THE MOST IDEALISTIC OF THE FOUR. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE USSR, AND REALIZES THAT THE UNITED STATES MUST PROVIDE THE COUNTERBALANCING POWER. FINALLY, HE HAD HIGH PRAISE FOR THE PRESENT STYLE OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN THE PHILIPPINES AND EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT "WE ARE CHANGING OUR SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE DIGNITY OF AN ALLIANCE."

5. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN AND FOREIGN SECRETARY ROMULO OFFICIALLY REEMPHASIZED AND RECONFIRMED MUCH OF WHAT ROMULO HAD HOPED WOULD COME OUT OF HIS VISIT.

IT DECLARES THAT BOTH COUNTRIES PLAN TO PROMOTE THE EVOLUTION OF A "SOUTHEAST ASIAN COMMUNITY THAT WOULD BE VIABLE AND STRONG ENOUGH TO STAND AND REMAIN INDEPENDENT AND ACHIEVE AN INTEGRATED ENTITY OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POWER." BOTH COUNTRIES REITERATED THEIR COMMITMENT TO ASEAN AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EFFECTIVE "PROCEDURES FOR PACIFIC SETTLEMENT OF INTRA-REGIONAL DISPUTES. THEY ALSO BOTH AGREED THAT ASEAN SHOULD HAVE A FORMAL CHARTER. "WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES WARRANT" A CONFERENCE OF ALL SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS WILL BE CONVENED PREPARATORY TO AN ASIAN FORUM. ROMULO AND CHARUNPHAN AGREED THAT SEATO SHOULD "CONCENTRATE ON SUPPORTING THE INTERNAL SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS" OF THEIR TWO COUNTRIES.

6. COMMENT: ROMULO'S VISIT WAS A SUCCESS IN THE SENSE THAT IT APPEARS TO HAVE STRENGTHENED THAI-PHILIPPINE RELATIONS. IT RECONFIRMED THE SIMILARITY OF BOTH COUNTRIES' PERSPECTIVES ON THE FUTURE OF ASEAN AND THE NEED TO DEVELOP AN INDIGENOUS SOURCE OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC UNITY AND POWER. ROMULO'S VISIT PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER PUBLIC EXPRESSION OF THE NEED TO TURN ASEAN FROM A CATCHY ACRONYM TO A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA--AN OBJECTIVE THAI AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S. ANAN PANYARACHUN STATED SO WELL ON 1 APRIL 1974 IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN CONFIDENTIAL

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STUDIES IN BOSTON.

7. IN THEIR DISCUSSION WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA) OFFICIALS SUGGESTED, HOWEVER, THAT LITTLE NEW OF SUBSTANCE OCCURRED. MATTERS DISCUSSED BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY WERE PRINCIPALLY THOSE THAT HAVE BEEN RAISED PREVIOUSLY AND ARE NOW BEING ACTED UPON IN OTHER FORUMS.

8. THERE APPEARS, IN SHORT, TO BE NO SHORTAGE OF EXPRESSION OF INTENT AND NOBLE OBJECTIVES. THE COMMUNIQUE AND PUBLIC SPEECHES HAVE YET TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE INITIATIVES REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE IN SUBSTANCE THE OBJECTIVES OUTLINED THEREIN.

9. REFERENCES MADE TO SEATO WOULD TEND TO FURTHER SUPPORT EMBASSY OPINION THAT IT WAS PROBABLY AUGUST 16 "NATION" ARTICLE RE SEATO

WHICH  
PROMPTED ROMULO'S CONCERN ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION (SEE REFTEL).  
KINTNER

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